

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application
PCT/EP99/04449 filed June 26, 1999**

number of from 0 to 10, and wherein (a) and (b) are present in quantities such that the equivalent ratio of the reactive hydrogen atoms in (b) to the α,β C=C double bonds in (a) is from 10:1 to 1:10, to form an intermediate product Z1; and

(ii) reacting the intermediate product Z1 with (c) one or more polyepoxides having a number of oxirane rings, wherein the intermediate product Z1 and the one or more polyepoxides are present in quantities such that the equivalent ratio of the oxirane rings to the reactive hydrogen atoms in (b) is from 100:1 to 1.5:1.--

--9. (New) The process according to claim 8, wherein the (a) one or more α,β -unsaturated carboxylic acid esters of the general formula (I) comprises a dialkyl maleate.--

--10. (New) The process according to claim 9, wherein the dialkyl maleate is selected from the group consisting of dimethyl maleate, diethyl maleate and mixtures thereof.--

--11. (New) The process according to claim 8, wherein the (b) one or more aminopolyalkylene oxide compounds comprises a monoaminopolyalkylene oxide compound.--

--12. (New) The process according to claim 11, wherein the monoaminopolyalkylene oxide compound corresponds to the general formula (II):



wherein R^8 represents a monofunctional organic group having from 1 to 12 carbon atoms, R^9 represents a polyoxyalkylene group having from 5 to 200 polyoxyalkylene units selected from the group consisting of ethylene oxide, propylene oxide and statistical or block mixtures thereof, and R^{10} represents hydrogen or an aliphatic radical having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.--

--13. (New) The process according to claim 11, wherein the monoaminopolyalkylene oxide compound has an average molecular weight of from 148 to 5000.--

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--14. (New) The process according to claim 8, wherein (a) and (b) are present in quantities such that the equivalent ratio of the reactive hydrogen atoms in (b) to the α,β C=C double bonds in (a) is from 4:1 to 1:4.--

--15. (New) The process according to claim 8, wherein the intermediate product Z1 and the one or more polyepoxides are present in quantities such that the equivalent ratio of the oxirane rings to the reactive hydrogen atoms in (b) is from 4:1 to 2:1.--

--16. (New) A self-dispersing, hardenable epoxy resin, said epoxy resin produced by the process according to claim 8.--

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--17. (New) A self-dispersing, hardenable epoxy resin, said epoxy resin produced by the process according to claim 9.--

--18. (New) A self-dispersing, hardenable epoxy resin, said epoxy resin produced by the process according to claim 11.--

--19. (New) An aqueous dispersion comprising a self-dispersing, hardenable epoxy resin according to claim 16.--

--20. (New) The aqueous dispersion according to claim 19, wherein the self-dispersing, hardenable epoxy resin comprises dispersed particles having a mean particle size of 500 nm or less.--

Please cancel claims 1-7, ~~without~~ prejudice.

REMARKS

Claims 8-20 are currently pending in the instant application.

The Specification has been amended to include the preferred section headings pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.77. An Abstract of the Disclosure has been added on a separate